

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

1945: Yalta pact aimed at
crushing workers' revolts

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 69/NO. 22

JUNE 6, 2005

U.S. military abused prisoners in Afghanistan

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A confidential U.S. Army investigation report, widely reported in the media at the end of May, details how U.S. troops have abused prisoners held at the U.S.-run Bagram Air base prison camp in Afghanistan.

The Army file reportedly says prison guards routinely shackled inmates to the ceilings of their cells, deprived them of sleep, kicked and beat prisoners, sexually humiliated them, and threatened them with guard dogs.

It also details the gruesome facts leading to the deaths of two Afghan inmates in December.

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Court sets June 7 hearing in 'defamation' suit by Utah mine bosses

BY PAUL MAILHOT

SALT LAKE CITY—A hearing has been set for June 7 in federal district court in Salt Lake City. On that date, presiding judge Dee Benson will hear the motions by the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Morning News*—Utah's two main dailies—and the *Militant* to dismiss a harassment lawsuit by C.W. Mining, which owns the Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah.

The company will also present its case for proceeding to trial on its charges of alleged "defamation" by these publications. C.W. Mining and the so-called In-

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Fighting for union, Utah miners picket Co-Op mine

Protest bosses' effort to bring back fired workers without union

BY KATHERINE BENNETT

HUNTINGTON, Utah—"Come and join us," Co-Op miners and their supporters called out to drivers in passing cars and coal trucks, as the unionists picketed May 22 at the road that leads to the Co-Op mine near this town. The picketing miners said they had just learned that a boss at the mine had been calling a few of the Co-Op miners and offering to rehire them. The miners have been involved in a 20-month-long battle with C.W. Mining, the company that owns Co-Op, to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

The picketers included four Co-Op miners, three members of UMWA Local 1769 from the nearby Deer Creek mine, and three retired miners. They waved signs that read, "UMWA is here to stay," "We want the UMWA," "We were fired for union activity," and "Count the Votes." They appealed for support to coal haulers and other motorists on the road to the mine and on the busy highway that it intersects.

Very few coal trucks entered or left the mine, however, another indication that the Co-Op bosses are not mining a lot of coal, workers said.

"I liked being at the picket line wavy-

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Militant/Luis Astorga

Co-Op miners and supporters picket May 23 at mine owned by C.W. Mining near Huntington, Utah. From left: Co-Op miners José Contreras and Alyson Kennedy; Tain Curtis and Brad Timothy, chairman of safety committee and president, respectively, of UMWA Local 1769 at nearby Deer Creek mine; and Co-Op miner Sergio Ponce.

'Guest worker' bill aims to regularize superexploitation of immigrant labor

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Senators John McCain of Arizona and Theodore Kennedy of Massachusetts introduced May 12 the "Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act." Modeled after the "guest worker" initiative proposed by President George Bush last year, the bipartisan measure is aimed at guaranteeing

U.S. bosses a steady pool of superexploited labor, while tightening the government's control over immigrant workers.

The bill would allow foreign-born workers to apply for a temporary work visa lasting up to six years. They would have to register with the U.S. government, submit to security and other "background" checks, and pay a \$500 visa application fee. Undocumented workers already living in the United States would also have to pay a \$2,000 fine.

Such "temporary workers"—hired only if a boss can claim that no "American"

wants the job—would be dependent on the employer to keep their legal status. After their visa expired they would be

**Socialist Workers candidate
for New York mayor:**

**Oppose
'guest worker' bills!**

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subject to deportation unless an employer sponsored them for permanent resident (green card) status. They would also be deportable if unemployed for more than 45 days, a provision making it easier for the government to carry out deportations in case of an economic downturn.

The bill aims to respond to the needs of U.S. capital, which relies heavily on immigrant labor. It is also designed to allow the government—in the name of "homeland

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U.S. officials balk at Venezuela's desire to develop nuclear power

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Initial reports indicate that Washington will use the Venezuelan government's expressed desire to develop nuclear energy to escalate its hostile campaign against Caracas. At the same time, the U.S. government is pressing the Organization of American States (OAS) to establish a commission to monitor the "quality of democracy" on the continent, which would target Venezuela.

On May 22 Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez said his government would like to develop nuclear power as a way of diversifying its energy sources. He said Venezuela would cooperate with Iran and with other Latin American nations to explore possible nuclear and solar energy projects.

In a column published the day before in the *Houston Chronicle* under the title "Is Venezuela going nuclear?" Douglas

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—Jack Barnes

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Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Atlanta

‘No cuts in pension benefits; extend Social Security to cover health care for all’

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN
ATLANTA—James Harris, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Atlanta, campaigned at a May 2 meeting to protest the government’s drive—backed by both Democrats and Republicans—to cut Social Security benefits. About 100 union members and others attended the meeting, which was held at the First Iconium Baptist Church.

“The labor movement needs to oppose all moves to cut current or future Social Security benefits, Medicare programs, or workers compensation,” Harris said. “At the same time we must recognize that the existing social security system does not meet the needs of working people. We need to fight to extend Social Security to cover universal, government-guaranteed, lifetime health care for everyone in this country.”

The fight around Social Security is not primarily an economic question, Harris said, but the great political and moral crisis of our time. It is a class question.

“Social Security was not a gift from any ruling-class politician. It was won through the labor battles in the 1930s and extended as a by-product of the civil rights movement in the 1960s,” Harris stated. “We can only effectively resist cuts in existing pension benefits and fight to extend Social Security with the same kind of working-class mobilizations.”

Harris, a textile worker in “right-to-work-for-less” Georgia, said that the need to organize trade unions and use and extend union power to resist the bosses’ attacks on wages and working conditions is the number one issue of the SWP’s 2005 campaign.

“I am with the socialist campaign 100 percent on that,” replied a teacher who told Harris that Atlanta is one of three major U.S. cities where teachers have no collective bargaining rights.

At the same time, Harris added, the SWP campaign starts with the world, opposing the drive by Washington and its allies to prevent nations oppressed by imperialism from developing nuclear power and other sources of energy needed to expand electrification in order to bring much of humanity out of darkness. “Countries like Iran, which is a major oil producer like others in the Mideast, and other semicolonial countries, have the right to develop nuclear power to achieve economic and social advances and decrease their dependency on a diminishing natural resource, petroleum,” Harris said.

At a May 7 campaign kick-off, Harris noted that while incumbent Atlanta mayor Shirley Franklin was recently chosen by *Time* magazine as one of the five best mayors in the United States, “This sterling image is far from the reality of most working people in the region. We have a completely different view.” Harris noted that Atlanta ranks fifth in child poverty rates among U.S. cities with populations exceeding 100,000.

“Forty percent of this city’s children live in official poverty,” stated Harris. “But this is not simply the result of the policies of one mayor—Democrat or Republican—or her predecessors. The problem is capitalism. Atlanta mirrors the trends that are evident in the country as a whole. They reflect the condition of the world economy—the actual condition of world capitalism, which



Militant/Bill Arth
James Harris, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Atlanta, campaigning at May 2 meeting to protest proposed cuts in Social Security benefits.

is in deepening economic crisis, a world depression. The roots of the crisis are international, not local.”

While campaigning in downtown Atlanta, Harris was invited to attend a prisoners’ rights meeting. This is a big question in Georgia, which is the number one state in per capita prison population and is home to over 40 prisons.

The SWP campaign participated in two public forums organized by Fairness for Prisoners’ Families & Communities United for Action, Power & Justice. The meetings reported on a victory the group won in March against the Board of Pardons and Paroles voiding the board’s “90 percent rule.” Under this policy, implemented in 1998, anyone convicted of one of 20 different crimes in Georgia had to serve 90 percent of their sentence before being considered for parole. The rule affected as many as 18,000 inmates.

“Working people caught in the coils of the U.S. judicial system know we are on enemy ground. We fight to delay injustice, to buy time, to mobilize broad popular support that can protect us from being railroaded,” Harris said. “A degree of justice is something workers sometimes win *despite* the legal system, not because of it. The prison population in the United States doubled under the Clinton administration. A similar trend continues under the Bush administration. The horrible injustice of the death penalty in the United States is anti-working-class and racist to its core.”

Harris said the SWP campaign supports the initiative by Fairness for Prisoners’ Families that calls for ending the state-secret status of parole files. The law makes it impossible for the prisoners or their lawyers to have access to their own records. “This is an outrageous curtailment of basic democratic rights, and as such it should be resisted,” Harris said. “What is happening today and in recent years at Guantánamo, what is happening with the

‘preventive detention’ of U.S. citizens, what is happening to the curtailment of the right to appeal deportations, targets us above all, not as suspicious foreigners, but as workers who are today and will in the future resist the brutality capitalism has in store for us.”

2005 Socialist Workers Party election campaigns

City/State	Candidate(s)
Atlanta	James Harris, Mayor
Boston†	Margaret Trowe, Mayor Laura Garza, City Council†
Cleveland	Romina Green, Mayor
Craig, Colorado*	Deborah Liatos, Board of Education, Moffat County
Des Moines, Iowa	Edwin Fruit, City Council
Houston*	Brian Williams, Mayor Anthony Dutrow, City Controller
Miami**	Omari Musa, Mayor
New Jersey†	Angela Lariscy, Governor Michael Ortega, State Assembly, 28th District
New York*	Martín Koppel, Mayor Arrin Hawkins, Manhattan Borough President Dan Fein, City Comptroller
Pittsburgh*	Brian Taylor, Mayor
San Francisco*	Dennis Richter, Treasurer * Laura Anderson, City Attorney
Seattle*	Chris Hoeppner, Mayor
St. Paul, Minnesota	Jacob Perasso, Mayor

*petitioning planned
**plan to get candidate on ballot through filing fee
†petitioning completed

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The Militant

Vol. 69/No. 22

Closing news date: May 25, 2005

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Published weekly except for one week in January, June, July, and August.
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 244-4899; Fax (212) 244-4947.
E-mail: TheMilitant@verizon.net
The Militant **website** is: www.themilitant.com
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.
Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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Meat packers fight for union at Smithfield North Carolina plant

BY SAM MANUEL

TAR HEEL, North Carolina—Fourteen workers employed by an in-house outfit that contracts to clean the giant Smithfield meatpacking plant here won a victory when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ordered their reinstatement April 11. The United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) had filed a complaint with the NLRB on behalf of the workers. The contract cleaning company, QSI, fired the workers when they attempted to walk off the job in November 2003 in protest against the dismissal of coworkers and a sympathetic supervisor.

In March workers on the cut floor stopped production for several hours to protest Smithfield's attempt to increase their workload. Workers said this move by the bosses was the breaking point in a long list of deteriorating conditions in the plant.

In a related matter, the Bladen County District Attorney's office dismissed arson charges filed by Smithfield against two employees who are known supporters of the fight by workers to unionize the plant.

In a number of interviews here over the May 14–15 weekend, workers indicated these are significant developments in the decade-long struggle to win representation by the UFCW. They come after an NLRB decision in January to throw out the results of the last union certification election that took place in 1997—when the union lost—and order a new vote.

The Smithfield plant here is the largest meatpacking plant in the world, with more than 5,000 employees. Workers slaughter on average 34,000 hogs per day over two shifts.

In addition to the United States, the company has operations in Poland, France, Romania, and Spain. According to a Smithfield report to the Security Exchange Commission, sales for the first quarter of this year increased by \$356 million, compared to the same quarter of 2004. The company's total operating profit for the same period rose 88 percent in a year, the report said.

Struggle on the cut floor

Workers on the loin line, a section of the cut floor, stopped production for several hours the first week in March against an attempt by the company to run three lines without enough workers. One of the plant's most lucrative contracts is pork loin sales to Japan. "If the quality is good it goes to Japan," said Juan, a worker on the loin line. "If it's not so good it stays here."

Workers said the company responded by bringing in new workers, called "green hats," after the color of their hard hats, with the hope of weakening resistance. "We had

to back down and regroup," said Ernesto, one of 30 workers who stopped work that day.

"Finally we decided to go to the office and tell them, if you are going to run the lines without enough people you have to slow down the line speed," said Juan. "Then they tried to divide us. The company said they could not meet with all of us at once and said we should pick a few leaders to speak for the group. We told them we don't have any leaders, we share a common problem."

"It wasn't just the line speed," said Ernesto, who has several years in the plant. "It's also the way they treat us, the yelling, the suspensions for small things, the discrimination, the lack of bathroom breaks." Ernesto said when he got hired you could count the number of workers from Mexico in the plant. "We faced a lot of discrimination," he said. It took him four years to get his first promotion. "Now we are everywhere in the plant," he added.

About 55 percent of the workforce is Spanish-speaking, many of them immigrants from Latin America. African-Americans, who were the majority eight years ago, now comprise about 35 percent of the workforce. The remaining 10 percent is split evenly between Native Americans and workers who are white.

"After a few hours another person from the office came and said they would resolve all our problems," said Juan. The company shut down one of the lines, reduced the speed, and met with small groups of workers to hear their grievances.

Juan and Ernesto said the bosses have since started to go back to understaffing the lines and increasing the line speed. "We may have to make another stand," Ernesto said.

Cleaners ordered to be reinstated

On April 11 the NLRB ordered Smithfield and QSI to reinstate 14 cleaners who were dismissed following work actions in November 2003. QSI was also ordered to compensate the workers "with interest, for any loss of earnings and benefits." The NLRB said both companies must stop "assaulting QSI employees, threatening QSI employees with arrest by Federal immigration officials, [and] causing QSI employees to be arrested because of their engagement in protected concerted activities." The company has appealed the decision and has not reinstated the workers so far.

The incident that led to the firings took place Nov. 10, 2003, when some 30 cleaning workers met in the parking lot before their shift started and refused to go to work. "We decided to go in three hours early so we could talk to all the workers and say we should not go in until our demands are met,"

announced that he would press Washington to turn over to Afghan authorities in Kabul the prisoners detained by the U.S. military. He also said that breaking into people's homes by U.S. troops, "must not be done without the permission of the Afghan government."

Bush responded that the many Afghan prisoners held at the U.S. military base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba—on soil occupied by Washington against the will of the Cuban people—will be sent back to Afghanistan "over time," essentially refusing Karzai's request. "Part of the issue is to make sure there is a place where the prisoners can be held," Bush claimed.

In a joint news conference with Karzai on May 23, Bush also made clear that all the operations of the 18,300 U.S. troops in Afghanistan will remain under control of U.S. military commanders, who would "cooperate and consult" with Afghan authorities. A joint declaration by Bush and Karzai stressed that U.S. forces "will continue to have access to Bagram Air Base and its facilities" and that "the U.S. and Coalition forces are to continue to have the freedom of action required to conduct appropriate military operations."



Worker on kill floor of Smithfield meatpacking plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina. Workers at this plant, which employs more than 5,000 people, have been fighting since 1994 to win representation by the United Food and Commercial Workers.

said Julio Vargas, one of the 14 fired workers. Their demands included a pay raise from \$6 an hour to \$7.

Like the workers on the cut floor, Vargas said the fight was not only about wages. Workers wanted an end to the harassment and insults from supervisors and security guards. Vargas said the workers, all male, particularly disliked one form of punishment for alleged safety or production violations that required them to wear a pink-colored helmet for various periods depending on the infraction.

Vargas said the workers also had to buy boots, jackets, pants, and safety glasses from the company. The average cost was \$70. "A supervisor would come by and say you need to change your jacket," Vargas said. "That meant you had to buy more jackets."

"They didn't keep their word," said Ramón, another fired cleaner. One week after agreeing to the wage increase and an end to dismissals for petty infractions the company fired workers they held responsible for leading the work stoppage.

After several hours on the job on Nov. 14, 2003, Ramón said he noticed a commotion at the doors leading out of the plant. Several workers were attempting to walk out after discovering the company's plan to fire some of them. "QSI supervisors and Smithfield security would not let us leave," Ramón said. "They told us that immigration was on the way and that if we left we would be arrested and deported." Ramón attempted to leave by another exit after being chased by a supervisor. During the interview with the *Militant* he rolled up his sleeve to show an eight-inch-long scar left from being cut on a fence he had scaled to get away. "I never got any medical attention for it," he said. Juan said he treated his wound at home because he was afraid to seek medical treatment.

"I won't go back for \$6.50 an hour, and I won't go back until we all go back," said Carlos one of the 14 workers.

Trumped-up arson charge

Last September, the Bladen County District Attorney dropped arson charges filed by Smithfield against Lorena Ramos and her husband, Jorge Vela. Ramos said that on Jan. 12, 2004, she and her husband were taken off the line and questioned about an alleged fire in the plant. After being interrogated separately she and her husband, both union supporters, were handcuffed, paraded through the plant, and held in a cell located on the company grounds.

Smithfield has its own private police force, which has the authority to arrest and lock up workers in the plant. Workers said the

cops patrol the facility. "I was very afraid," Ramos said. "They even stand around and watch you while you are working."

Since the company's security force was transformed into a police force in 2000 it has arrested 90 workers and charged them with various infractions. In most cases the charges have been dropped.

Ramos and her husband were first held in the company jail without access to an attorney. "I wasn't even allowed to call my babysitter to let her know what had happened," Ramos said. "The whole time they kept trying to get me to sign a statement, but I refused." Ramos was struck in the face with a folder by one of the cops. She was also repeatedly asked whether the cleaners had paid her to attempt to set the fire. After seven hours the two workers were taken to the county jail. They were released three hours later after posting a \$15,000 bail.

"They said they had a video of me striking matches but they never produced it in court," Ramos said. During the nine-month case Ramos said the company and the district attorney's office began to offer deals in which she would admit guilt in exchange for leniency. "I told them I would go to jail before admitting to something I didn't do."

The company's case collapsed when it became clear there had been no fire at all. A worker had put her wet and cold gloves in the microwave in an effort to dry them but they burned. The worker wrapped the burned gloves in a paper towel and threw them in the garbage in a break area. "The gloves left a burning smell," Ramos said. "That was their case."

Union wins new vote

Two efforts by workers to win representation by the UFCW failed in 1994 and 1997. In January an NLRB panel upheld the 2000 ruling of an administrative law judge overturning the outcome of the 1997 election, charging the company of conspiring with the cops to instigate violence during the vote count. The ruling said company managers collaborated with the local sheriff's department to intimidate and physically assault union supporters.

Following the 1997 vote, union supporters won damages of \$755,000 in a civil lawsuit against the company after union election monitors were badly beaten by company thugs. That judgment was subsequently overturned to the company's favor on a technicality. According to a January 10 press release by the UFCW, the NLRB has also ordered a new union representation election, the format and date of which is to be set by the board's regional director.

Prisoner abuse in Afghanistan

Continued from front page

cember 2002. Dilawar, a 22-year-old taxi driver was one of those tortured to death. He was detained at Bagram after driving passengers past a U.S. military base at Camp Salerno, which was the target of a rocket attack that morning. The three passengers in Dilawar's taxi were eventually taken to Guantánamo where they were held for more than a year. Dilawar was reportedly chained by his wrists to the top of his cell for days.

This treatment of prisoners by U.S. guards in Afghanistan is similar to the well-known abuse of inmates in U.S.-run prisons in Iraq and mirrors widespread practices throughout the prison system in the United States.

"I was shouting and crying, and no one was listening," said Abdur Rahim, a 26-year-old baker from Khost, commenting on his treatment upon first being incarcerated at Bagram, according to the *New York Times*. "When I was shouting, the soldiers were slamming my head against the desk."

Shortly after these reports appeared in the media, Afghan president Hamid Karzai paid a visit to the United States where he met with President George Bush. Karzai

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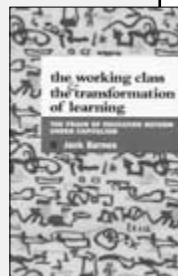
THE WORKING CLASS & THE TRANSFORMATION OF LEARNING: THE FRAUD OF EDUCATION REFORM UNDER CAPITALISM

by Jack Barnes

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Picket at Co-Op mine

Continued from front page

ing the sign and truck drivers blowing their horns. I didn't want to leave," Sergio Ponce, a Co-Op miner, told the *Militant*. "I'm ready to come back next week."

A union representation election was held at the mine December 17. Faced with a likely victory for the UMWA, C.W. Mining fired 30 miners, all Mexican-born workers, eight days before the vote. The company alleged that these workers did not have valid documentation to work in the United States. The dismissed workers pointed out that they had been working with the same documents for years, since they were hired, and their validity became an issue only on the eve of the union certification vote.

This was the second time the miners had been fired. The bosses first locked them out on Sept. 22, 2003, after they protested the dismissal of one of their coworkers and demanded safe working conditions, dignity on the job, and a living wage. These miners were being paid between \$5.50 and \$7 per hour, while wages for underground coal miners in the country average at least \$17 an hour.

After a strike that lasted nearly 10 months, during which the workers reached out and received widespread solidarity from the labor movement in the West and beyond, the National Labor Relations Board ordered the miners reinstated. The UMWA had filed charges with the labor board that the miners had been illegally fired for union activity. The miners were back on the job July 12, 2004. Between then and the end of the year, the bosses waged warfare in the mine to prevent unionization, including selective harassment and firings of union militants.

Exchange on picket line

"We want them to pay you what we are getting," said Bob Fivecoat, a retired miner and member of UMWA Local 9958, who

joined the May 22 picket line. "We want to help make it better for you."

Fivecoat, along with Mike Durrant, a member of UMWA Local 1769, Brad Timothy, president of the same union local, and Bill Estrada, a Co-Op miner, were talking to a miner who is related to the owners of the mine as he was leaving the Co-Op mine.

This miner told workers on the picket line he liked working at the mine and that "things were fine." He said anyone who doesn't want to work at Co-Op can leave and go to another mine. When asked how much he makes an hour he would not answer. This miner told the picketers that Co-Op was doing the "Mexicans a favor" to give them jobs, adding that production has dropped and that the company is trying to hire new miners.

The UMWA members patiently explained what having a real union at the mine would mean. "Every person up there is being abused," Durrant said. "We don't have anything against you. The union is the way. I have got four years to retire. When I retire I will get \$1,800 a month plus a medical card. When we stick together you can go against the coal companies."

The Co-Op miners said they saw no Mexican-born miners going into the mine that day for afternoon shift.

Many coal haulers and other drivers passing by honked and waved at the miners in solidarity. Encouraged, the Co-Op miners said that they will organize similar picket lines in the future.

"We did the picket line to show that our case has not gone away and to put pressure on the labor board," said José Contreras, one of the Co-Op miners on the picket line. "We have to count on the support from retired miners and workers at other mines to win our fight. We should repeat the picket line to let people know the fight continues."

"We are here to support our fellow



Militant/Katherine Bennett

Retired union miners Bob Fivecoat and Ernesto López join Co-Op miners at May 23 picket line outside the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, in support of the struggle to win UMWA representation at the mine.

workers. If we can't support them we are no good," said Brad Timothy, who was just elected the new president of UMWA Local 1769 at the Deer Creek mine. "We need to share our goodness with others."

Tain Curtis, chairman of the local's safety committee, said the unionists would bring other miners to the next picket line.

UMWA District 22 conference

The next day, a conference of representatives of UMWA locals in District 22, which encompasses unionized workers in the western part of the country, was held at the UMWA hall in Price. About 50 people attended, including local presidents and other officers, as well as other UMWA members from North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

Alyson Kennedy, one of the three Co-Op miners who are women, attended the meeting, representing the workers fighting for UMWA representation against C.W. Mining. Kennedy said she was received warmly, with many questions on the current state of the battle. "At the registration table the delegate asked me which local I'm from," Kennedy said. "When I said I am a Co-op miner he said 'Yes, you are a future local of the UMWA'."

Kennedy reported that Mike Dalpiaz, a UMWA international vice-president, updated the meeting on the Co-Op struggle and told everyone that the Co-Op miners had just held a picket line at the mine. He announced a picnic and barbeque in July to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the Co-Op miners winning their jobs back, invited everyone in District 22 to attend, and said the exact date of the event will be announced soon.

According to Kennedy, three members of UMWA Local 1924 at the Kayenta Mine near Kayenta, Arizona, who attended the meeting, delivered a check for \$770 from the local to the Co-Op miners for their union-organizing struggle.

"A member of the UMWA Local 1332 from the McKinley mine invited the Co-Op miners to attend the annual picnic of that local on July 24," Kennedy added.

Upcoming activities include the annual commemoration of the Ludlow massacre, which will take place June 5 near Trinidad, Colorado. The Co-Op miners are planning to send a delegation to the event. On April 20, 1914, a tent colony set up by striking miners in Ludlow, near Trinidad in southeastern Colorado, was attacked by Colorado militiamen, coal company guards, and thugs. Twenty men, women, and children were killed—many of whom were Mexican, Greek, and Italian immigrants.

A monument of a Ludlow striking miner, woman, and child was vandalized two years ago, which included decapitating the statues. At the ceremony this year the monument will be restored to its original state. Donations came in from around the world to help pay for the \$80,000 restoration.

On June 4 a meeting of the UMWA's International Executive Board will be held in Trinidad, Colorado. UMWA representatives from around the United States are expected to attend.

UMWA members in the area say the potential for organizing coal miners, coal haulers, and construction workers in the mines in this region is better now because of the boom in coal production in the West and struggles that have erupted such as the one at Co-Op.

In the coal producing counties of Carbon, Emery, and Sevier in southeastern Utah, there are 10 operating mines, all underground. Two of these mines are organized by the UMWA, while the rest are nonunion. Over the last year coal mining has expanded substantially in this state and throughout the West. This has led to a lot of hiring. Many of the new employees are young workers who have never worked in a coal mine before.

At the end of April, Bronco Energy Fund, Inc.—an energy investment company that includes operations in coal, oil, and gas exploration and production—announced that its subsidiary, Bronco Coal Co., plans to reopen a coal mine near East Carbon and Sunnyside, Utah. Bronco said that it has acquired the land and mineral rights to the Columbia mine, which was last operated in 1966 by U.S. Steel. Bronco said it plans to acquire three more coal mines later this year.

June 7 hearing set in suit against 'Militant'

Continued from front page

ternational Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), which workers describe as a company union, have charged all three newspapers with defamation for reporting on what the Co-Op miners have said and done in their 20-month-long fight to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

The court has scheduled a second hearing on August 1 to hear similar motions to dismiss filed by the UMWA, 16 individual Co-Op miners, and other labor organizations and individuals who have supported the miners in their struggle for a union. C.W. Mining has charged these defendants with unfair labor practices, as well as defamation.

It is not known yet whether the judge will rule on all the motions to dismiss after the second hearing or decide first on the requests by the newspapers to throw out the lawsuit.

Meanwhile, supporters of the *Militant* have been pressing ahead to win endorsements and contributions to the Militant Fighting Fund, which was set up last year to help the *Militant* and Socialist Workers

Party wage a defense campaign in this case. The plaintiffs have charged the SWP with defamation too on the false claim that the party owns and controls the *Militant*.

New endorsements by prominent individuals in the labor movement, Black struggle, civil liberties groups, churches, and college campuses show that support for this fight to defend free speech and freedom of the press is expanding.

"The notion that a corporation has been 'defamed' merely because the press decides to report on a labor dispute between the corporation and its workers, and include statements made by either side to the dispute, warps the legal concept of 'defamation' beyond recognition," reads a statement issued May 11 by James Lafferty, executive director of the Los Angeles chapter of the National Lawyers Guild. "If freedom of the press still means anything in this country surely it means that a political party and a newspaper, (in this case, *The Militant*), as well as any other newspaper reporting on a labor dispute, is free to do so without the threat of having to defend a costly, frivolous lawsuit."

"*The Militant* newspaper is obviously right to characterize the corporation's lawsuit as a naked attempt to silence, or at least alter, the way in which the press are covering the dispute. We salute *The Militant* for its statement that it, 'will not be intimidated or censored from covering this fight.' Knowing *The Militant* newspaper as I do, I would have expected no less."

Such statements, which are beginning to multiply across the United States, help counter the mine bosses' attempts to enlist the courts in thwarting the union-organizing fight at the Co-Op mine, and chill freedom of the press to report the miners' side of the story.

Dee Rowland of the Peace and Justice Commission of the Catholic Diocese in Salt Lake City is another recent endorser of the Militant Fighting Fund. Rowland, a long-time backer of the Co-Op miners' union-organizing struggle, was instrumental in mobilizing support for the miners among Catholics here. She helped coordinate a visit by Bishop George Niederauer to the Co-Op miners' picket line in May 2004.

Niederauer's visit, which received extensive publicity in the local media, was

a significant boost to the miners' morale. The bishop told the miners he backed their struggle and would continue to campaign on their behalf. As a result of the bishop's actions he was included in the initial list of defendants in the C.W. Mining suit. When C.W. Mining and the IAUWU amended their complaint in December 2004, the coal bosses dropped Catholic Church defendants in an attempt to divide supporters of the Co-Op miners and dampen backing for their struggle by the church.

Hans Ehrbar, professor of economics at the University of Utah and another early defendant in the C.W. Mining lawsuit, endorsed the Militant Fighting Fund campaign as well. Ehrbar was sued for encouraging his students to write about the labor dispute at the Co-Op mine. On April 20, Judge Benson agreed to Ehrbar's motion to dismiss charges against him because C.W. Mining attorneys had failed to serve him with court papers as required by law.

"I was teaching a class on Marxist economics," Ehrbar told the *Militant*, "and I decided to give students the option of writing about labor struggles today. To encourage this I put up a web site with links to articles written about the Co-Op miners' fight. For that I was sued for defamation."

Ehrbar said he would be putting his web site back up next semester and again encourage students to get interested in the miners' fight for the union at the Co-Op mine. He also made a contribution of \$180 to help with the *Militant's* defense campaign.

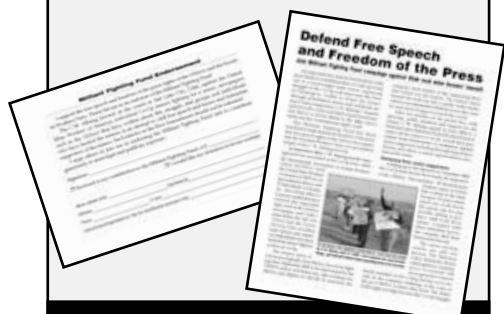
Militant supporters are campaigning to raise tens of thousands of dollars through the Militant Fighting Fund to pay for mounting legal and publicity expenses. Fund-raising is going hand-in-hand with getting new endorsers.

In Birmingham, Alabama, supporters of the *Militant* signed up Colonel Stone Johnson as such an endorser. Johnson, who is a member of the Birmingham chapter of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, is a veteran of the civil rights struggles in the South.

Shirley Hyche, a well-known miner and member of UMWA Local 2368 from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, endorsed as well.

Endorse & contribute to Militant Fighting Fund!

Download New Brochure & Endorser Cards at: WWW.THEMILITANT.COM



Send contributions/endorsements to:
P.O. Box 520994
Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0994
MilitantFightingFund@yahoo.com

1,389 subscribe to ‘Militant’ in 7 weeks

BY PAUL PEDERSON

“We welcome the nearly 1,400 readers who subscribed the past seven weeks,” said *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis, at the end of the successful spring circulation drive.

A weeklong national sales effort in the Western coalfields wrapped up on the final weekend of the campaign. David Flanagan from Price, Utah, sent a note on the results.

“We sold a total of 34 *Militant* subscriptions during the weeklong effort,” Flanagan reported. “Ten of those were to coal miners; of those, eight are miners involved in the union-organizing effort at the Co-Op mine in Huntington.

“We were joined by *Militant* supporters from Cleveland, Los Angeles, Colorado, and Salt Lake City,” he continued. “We were able to send people to sell outside the entrance to seven of the 10 mines in the area during the shift changes. Most of the subscriptions we sold were during door-to-door campaigning in the mining towns around here. In two small former company towns of East Carbon and Sunnyside, we sold 10 subscriptions.”

“The team was great,” said Mike Slavik, 20, who participated in the western coal team. Slavik works in a sandblasting shop in Cleveland and joined the Young Socialists after returning home from the trip. “It was a lot different from doing tables on the street here in Cleveland,” he said.

“Almost everyone we met going door-to-door in the area knew about the Co-Op

miners’ fight for the union,” Slavik noted. “Most said they were for the union getting in at Co-Op. This was true of the coal haulers, too.”

Julian Santana, 24, a meat packer who is currently laid off in Los Angeles, also commented on how many pro-union workers he met on the team. “During a visit to Orangeville, Utah, we met a coal hauler who says they haven’t had a raise in 15 years,” he said. Santana said he participated in seven sales at mine portals in the area. “I saw a lot of interest in organizing unions at the mines and among the coal haulers.”

“The third day I was there I met Pat Dirks, a miner who was nearly killed in an accident,” Slavik said. “At the end of this month, the company is cutting insurance to his family. The two miners that went to rescue him got cited by MSHA [Mine Safety and Health Administration], while the company got off.”

Dirks was working at the Dugout Mine, near Price, last November when he suffered serious injuries when the roof of the mine collapsed on him.

Slavik says the experience meeting miners, coal haulers, and others involved in the discussions and struggles on unionizing the mines has got him thinking about getting involved in the struggle. “Hopefully in the next couple years, I might go down that way and get a job in the mines,” he said.

A *Militant* sales team from Los Angeles visited an area of the nearby city of Compton



Militant/Sarah Ullman

Margaret Trowe (second from right), SWP candidate for mayor of Boston, campaigns with Tom Baumann (second from left), May 14 at “Wake up the Earth” festival.

May 15, which was recently the scene of reckless police violence. While chasing an unarmed driver, several deputies fired over 120 rounds of ammunition in a residential working-class neighborhood, injuring the driver and leaving bullet holes in four different houses.

“The bullet missed my husband’s head by two inches,” said a woman who lives in an upstairs apartment near the scene. “He was covered in glass from the broken window.”

“They didn’t have to shoot so many times,” said a man who decided to subscribe to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Another new *PM* subscriber pointed to a window in her house that had been shattered by police bullets.

“I always say ‘you’re the same thing I am when you take off that uniform,’” said Shara Wilson, 28, as she signed up for a subscription to the *Militant*. She described how the cops are constantly harassing people in the neighborhood.

Her fiancé, Germaine Catching, 25, a trucker, said that newscasts he had seen about the incident began with the line “tonight, in a troubled neighborhood in Compton....”

“Well, there wasn’t any trouble until they brought it here,” he commented.

Concurrent with the subscription effort, socialists around the world have been campaigning to sell the two newest issues of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist

politics and theory. That campaign will continue through August 15, the end of the World Festival of Youth and Students taking place in Caracas, Venezuela.

FBI steps up mail interception

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The FBI is seeking broad new authority to expand its spying on mail sent through the U.S. Postal Service. A proposal under discussion by the Senate Intelligence Committee would compel postal inspectors to turn over the names, addresses, and all material appearing on the outside of letters and contents of postcards for any individuals the FBI targets for so-called terrorism investigations. The proposal would also prevent the post office from publicly disclosing the existence of these mail covers.

This proposal is part of a broader request for authority to issue “administrative subpoenas,” which would allow the FBI to seize private records from hospitals, doctors’ offices, libraries, banks, and other businesses without first getting approval from a judge.

The FBI has been conducting mail surveillance for decades for what it terms criminal and “national security” investigations. The new proposal, however, “removes discretion from the Postal Inspection Service as to how the mail covers are implemented,” Zoe Strickland, the chief privacy officer for

Continued on Page 11

Militant Fund goes over the top

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The \$90,000 *Militant* spring fund drive is over the top. In the final week \$25,156 in contributions was collected, the largest amount in a single week over the eight-week effort. That brings the total to \$94,330.

Partisans of the *Militant* around the world stepped up efforts in the last half of the campaign, turning around what began as a slow pace of collection of contributions. In local areas supporters of the *Militant* organized to send fund appeal letters to every reader of the socialist publication. That was followed up with phone calls and individual meetings.

That began to turn the drive around. While just over \$16,000 was collected in the first half of the fund campaign. The pace averaged over \$17,000 a week in the opening three weeks of the second half. In the final week *Militant* supporters made a special effort to organize to collect all funds and in many cases to express mail the final amounts to arrive on time. In addition to the United States contributions came from Australia, Canada, France, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Militant supporters in France report that they got an unexpected boost when a retired worker kicked in a \$500 contribution. As a result they were able exceed their quota of \$300 by more than double the amount.

“We’re not slowing down,” wrote *Militant* supporters in Boston after reporting making their quota of \$3,300.

“As of tonight we have collected \$1,145 reported Kevin Dwire from Des Moines. We just got another \$30 contribution from a UAW member.... She is working to get her union steward on board for the Militant Fighting Fund.” Another contributor in Colorado decided to split his \$200 contribution between the two funds. The Militant Fighting Fund is organizing the defense campaign for the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party against a harassment lawsuit filed by the owners of the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, in an effort to stifle support for miners there who are fighting for a union (see front page article).

The \$90,000 spring fund will help cover the costs of producing the socialist newsweekly, which will soon come out in a bilingual format. These costs include rent, utilities, and printing and shipping costs. The fund will also help finance reporting teams, like an upcoming trip to Venezuela planned for this July, and coverage of the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students, being held in Caracas in August.

If you were unable to get your contribution in before the May 22 deadline, it’s still needed. Checks or money orders should be made out to The Militant, earmarked “Spring Fund Drive,” and sent to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

\$90,000 Militant Fund 3/26–5/22: Final results

	Goal	Paid	%
FRANCE	300	762	254%
CANADA	1,230	1,742	142%
ICELAND	200	230	115%
AUSTRALIA	750	800	107%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	1,750	1,850	106%
Christchurch	800	850	106%
N.Z. totals	2,550	2,700	106%
SWEDEN	800	850	106%
UNITED KINGDOM	700	700	100%
UNITED STATES			
Tampa	1,500	1,745	116%
Price, UT	2,400	2,659	111%
Boston	3,300	3,567	108%
Omaha	355	383	108%
Pittsburgh	2,500	2,694	108%
Des Moines	1,100	1,170	106%
Washington	3,000	3,167	106%
Craig, CO	1,800	1,900	106%
Newark	3,750	3,945	105%
Atlanta	4,300	4,505	105%
Los Angeles	9,000	9,405	105%
Detroit	2,500	2,585	103%
San Francisco	9,500	9,690	102%
Miami	1,400	1,425	102%
New York	11,000	11,101	101%
Chicago	4,000	4,025	101%
Houston	3,500	3,520	101%
NE Pennsylvania	1,500	1,505	100%
Twin Cities	4,800	4,805	100%
Birmingham	1,700	1,700	100%
Cleveland	1,000	1,000	100%
Philadelphia	3,000	3,000	100%
Salt Lake City	600	600	100%
Seattle	6,000	5,850	98%
Other	600	600	100%
U.S totals	84,105	86,546	102%
Total	90,635	94,330	104%
Should be	90,000	90,000	100%

New International sales campaign March 26 – August 15

Country	Goal	Sold	%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	120	113	94%
Edinburgh	50	38	76%
UK total	170	151	89%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	50	41	82%
Christchurch	20	14	70%
N.Z. total	70	55	79%
SWEDEN	40	27	68%
UNITED STATES			
NE Pennsylvania	40	36	90%
Omaha	32	28	88%
Washington	100	78	78%
Detroit	60	42	70%
Seattle	90	61	68%
Chicago	100	67	67%
Houston	100	67	67%
Los Angeles	200	133	67%
Cleveland	40	26	65%
New York	250	158	63%
Atlanta	100	62	62%
Miami	70	43	61%
Tampa	60	33	55%
Birmingham	50	26	52%
Pittsburgh	100	52	52%
Twin Cities	105	54	51%
San Francisco	185	89	48%
Craig, CO	40	19	48%
Newark	125	58	46%
Des Moines	80	37	46%
Boston	120	53	44%
Philadelphia	75	31	41%
Price, UT	65	25	38%
Salt Lake City	15	2	13%
Other		109	
U.S. total	2202	1389	63%
CANADA	120	72	60%
AUSTRALIA	50	28	56%
ICELAND	32	14	44%
Int'l totals	2684	1736	65%

‘Militant’ Subscription Drive April 2–May 22 Final Results

Country	Goal	Sold	%
AUSTRALIA	30	32	107%
CANADA	60	61	102%
ICELAND	17	19	112%
NEW ZEALAND			
Christchurch	15	18	120%
Auckland	35	35	100%
N.Z. total	50	53	106%
SWEDEN	20	21	105%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	20	22	110%
London	40	44	110%
UK total	60	66	110%
UNITED STATES			
Washington	55	63	115%
Salt Lake City	15	17	113%
Des Moines	50	56	112%
Craig, CO	20	22	110%
Los Angeles	100	108	108%
New York	115	124	108%
Twin Cities	70	75	107%
NE Pennsylvania	40	42	105%
San Francisco	25	26	104%
Price, UT	50	52	104%
Houston	50	52	104%
Newark	70	72	103%
Boston	60	61	102%
Chicago	65	66	102%
Atlanta	40	40	100%
Birmingham	25	25	100%
Seattle	35	35	100%
Omaha	25	25	100%
Tampa	30	29	97%
Detroit	28	27	96%
Pittsburgh	50	37	74%
Miami	65	43	66%
Cleveland	35	19	54%
Philadelphia	50	21	42%
U.S. total	1,168	1,137	97%
Int'l totals	1,405	1,389	103%
Goal/Should be	1,350	1,350	100%

Yalta pact aimed at crushing anticapitalist revolts

Imperialists used 1945 accord with Stalin to maintain domination of W. Europe

Printed below are major excerpts from an editorial in the March 1945 Fourth International, a predecessor of the Marxist magazine New International, on the Yalta conference, which took place in February of that year. Meeting in Crimea in the Ukrainian republic of the Soviet Union, U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, British prime minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet premier Joseph Stalin agreed upon a division of the world into spheres of influence for the soon-to-be victorious Allied powers in World War II. We are publishing this editorial as part of the column that appears regularly this year—the 60th anniversary since the end of World War II—to tell the truth about the second worldwide interimperialist slaughter. Copyright © New International. Reprinted by permission. Footnotes are by the Militant.



From left, British prime minister Winston Churchill, U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, and Soviet premier Joseph Stalin meeting Feb. 9, 1945, in Yalta, Ukraine, USSR.

The Yalta conference closed amid jubilation over the “complete accord” among the victory-flushed Anglo-American imperialists and their ally in the Kremlin. But the peoples of the world, whether they emerge in the camp of the victors or the vanquished, have no cause whatever for joy. While the decisions of the “Big Three” remain cloaked with impenetrable secrecy as were all their previous agreements, their actions have long ago testified that the only charter sponsored by them is the charter of the counter-revolution. Their common goal is not to promote progress, freedom and prosperity but to perpetuate reaction, slavery and degradation in a world moving towards savagery.

If the scope of secret diplomacy in the second world war has surpassed all previous performances in this field, it is because of the enormity of the conspiracy that is being consummated behind the backs of the masses. The sum and substance of this conspiracy is to deprive the peoples of the world of any voice in determining their own fate. Left to their own volition, the war-tortured masses of Europe would swiftly and unfailingly embrace Socialism as the only way out of the bloody morass of capitalism.

Tendencies to transform the imperialist war into the struggle for the abolition of capitalist rule and of capitalist property forms manifested themselves early in the second world war. This was the meaning in its initial stages of the civil war that flared in Yugoslavia in 1941. This was implicit in the downfall of Italian fascism. The same trend manifested itself in France, Rumania and Bulgaria, and most recently in Greece.

With the collapse of Hitler’s regime, the mightiest force for Socialism on the European continent—the multimillion-headed proletariat of Germany—would be set in motion and would invest the unfolding

“Yalta is the banner of the counter-revolution. Here Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin arrived at a division of labor in their program to crush all opposition of the insurgent masses.”

European revolution with irresistible force. The three conspirators at Crimea know this. Their main objective is to atomize the forces of the German working class, clamp its dismembered sections in the vise of tripartite military occupation and drown in blood every attempt of independent action on the part of the masses. With the main detachment of the Socialist revolution in Europe thus paralyzed, they hope, with the aid of the treacherous Stalinist and Social Democratic leadership, to demoralize all the other revolutionary sectors and to bleed them white in a series of isolated battles, patterned after Churchill’s recent bestial exploits in Greece.

Plans for German disarmament

The plans for the disarmament of Ger-

many agreed upon at Yalta are, of course, cynically presented as safeguards of peace. There is nothing pacifist about them. The impelling considerations are to deliver the country to the mercy of the imperialist “democracies” by robbing it of every possibility of resistance and self-defense. The barb of this “disarmament” is aimed primarily at the German masses whom the “Big Three” intend to disarm at all costs. Against the insurgent workers Churchill and Roosevelt will not hesitate for a moment to place armaments at the disposal of the Nazis, with whom the American military authorities have been so brazenly collaborating in the occupied areas.

Least of all will this measure bring alleviation so far as the monstrous burden of militarism is concerned. After the first world war Germany remained completely disarmed for almost a decade and a half. This did not lead to a diminution in world expenditures on armaments. On the contrary, larger sums were expended on armies, navies and armaments after the Versailles Peace¹ than in the era of the armament race, which preceded the war of 1914–1918. The peak year of that era was 1913.

If the monetary values spent on armaments in 1913 are set at 100, we shall find that the index for 1925 amounts to 135, climbing to 157 in 1929 and soaring in 1936 to 350, or three and a half times that of 1913. The growth of militarism is inseparable from capitalist decay. It constitutes a striking confirmation of Lenin’s analysis that capitalism breeds war. It ought to be added that this intolerable growth of militarism was one of the causes of the dislocation and paroxysm of world economy in the ’twenties and ’thirties. To get rid of militarism it is necessary to sever its capitalist roots.

A peace treaty can prove just as destructive, if not more so, than the war which preceded. The economic pillage of Germany, projected at Yalta, should it be realized in life, will bring this truth home with crushing force. Leon Trotsky pointed out during the first world war that Europe is “not only a geographic term, but a certain economic and cultural-historic community.” Germany is the most advanced component part of this economic organism. The bulk of Europe’s productive apparatus is concentrated on her

territories. The greatest productive force in Europe is the German working class. How can Europe survive, let alone successfully undertake reconstruction, if these are decimated?

The problems of reconstruction after the first world war appear insignificant compared to the problems and tasks that lie ahead. Each day brings new reports of famine spreading throughout Europe. In France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Greece—everywhere millions face slow death by starvation. The threat of epidemics looms more and more starkly....

Work of reconstruction

The work of reconstruction will have to be carried on in a world fearfully impoverished by the war....

The American and English imperialists are least of all concerned with the restoration of Europe. England’s primary consideration is to retain her colonial empire....

Yalta is the banner of the counter-revolution. Here the seal was set on Europe’s doom. Here Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin arrived at a division of labor in their program to crush all opposition of the insurgent masses to this death-sentence. The completion of the process of Europe’s ruination already far advanced—that is their avowed charter for the agonized continent.

Stalinism emerges from the Crimea Conference as the hangman of the revolutionary workers. The gory handiwork of the Noskes and Scheidemanns² who after the last war shot down in Germany tens of thousands of followers of Liebknecht³ and Luxemburg⁴, is this time entrusted to the Kremlin and its agents.

In return for this, Roosevelt and Churchill have underwritten the territorial booty that the Kremlin grabbed as a result of its 1939 pact with Hitler, along with spheres of influence in eastern Europe and the Balkans. In addition Stalin has been promised his share in the looting of Germany.

Stalinist methods

In the period preceding Soviet involvement in the war the Stalinist bureaucracy sought to solve the great problems with its hand-to-mouth methods. They were sure they could escape war. And so they sought for every avenue—from “peace congresses,” “non-aggression pacts,” entry into the League of Nations, etc., etc., down to a “peace pact” with Hitler. This escapist policy instead of safeguarding the USSR served only to isolate the country and utterly expose it to the fullest blow of German imperialism, under conditions and at a time chosen by the enemy.

Now faced with the incredible tasks of reconstruction, which in large measure arise as a consequence of the previous policy, the Kremlin still fumbling empirically grasps as a panacea—at what? At the very solution attempted by none other than Clemenceau⁵ who once promised to rebuild France, likewise at the expense of Germany. Clemenceau’s scheme appeared

Continued on next page

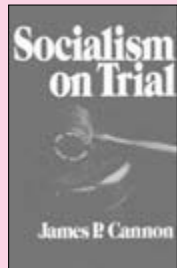
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NOTES

1. The Treaty of Versailles, signed June 28, 1919, returned Alsace-Lorraine to France, deprived Germany of other territory in Europe plus all overseas colonies, limited Germany’s military strength, and provided for the payment of war reparations by Germany to the Allied powers. The treaty’s effect upon the German economy was disastrous; it was engineered to accomplish the dismantling of German economic and military strength in favor of the other imperialist powers, but it also had the aim of stemming the revolutionary tide in Germany. It was one of the factors that Hitler used demagogically in his ascent to power.

2. Gustav Noske and Philipp Scheidemann were leaders of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in first decades of twentieth century. They were chauvinists during World War I, and they participated in the German government that prosecuted the war and afterwards helped oversee the bloody suppression of the 1918–19 revolutionary uprising in Germany.

3. Karl Liebknecht (1871–1919) was a German revolutionary and the only member of the

Reichstag (German parliament) to vote against war credits in December 1914. He helped found the Spartacus current in the SPD and used his parliamentary seat to lead antiwar agitation. He was jailed for antiwar activities in 1916 for two years. He was a founding leader of the German Communist Party in December 1918 and a leader of the Berlin workers’ uprising in January 1919. He was arrested and murdered following the suppression of the uprising at the instigation of SPD leaders.

4. Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919) was a founding leader of the social democratic party in Poland in 1893. She later lived in Germany and joined the SPD in 1898. She became a leader of the Spartacus group during World War I along with Liebknecht, and was imprisoned in 1915. A founding leader of the German Communist Party, she was arrested and murdered at the instigation of the SPD after the 1919 uprising in Berlin.

5. Georges Clemenceau was French prime minister, 1906–09 and 1917–20. He was the chief organizer of the 1919 Paris conference and architect of the Treaty of Versailles.

U.S. rulers debate Yalta pact

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In response to comments made by President George Bush in his recent visit to Latvia sharply criticizing the February 1945 Yalta Conference agreements, a recurrent debate about its meaning has been featured prominently in the capitalist media.

Yalta ratified the agreement between Washington and London, the two main imperialist powers that emerged victorious in World War II, to carve up the world into “spheres of influence” with the complicity of the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet workers state.

At that summit meeting, attended by U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, British prime minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, Moscow committed itself to do its part to guarantee the defense of capitalist property relations throughout war-devastated Europe, which by then was seething with revolutionary unrest among workers and farmers in a number of countries, from France to Greece.

At issue in the debate among capitalist circles is that, in exchange for Moscow’s counterrevolutionary role, Washington and London agreed to accept Eastern Europe—then occupied by Red Army troops—as a Soviet “sphere of influence.”

In Eastern Europe, the Stalinist regime initially propped up weak capitalist governments as a buffer between itself and imperialist Europe. Within a couple of years, however, as the imperialist powers escalated military and economic pressures against the Soviet Union, Moscow pulled the plug on those regimes and carried out the overturn of capitalist property relations in the countries of the region.

“For much of Eastern and Central Europe, victory brought the iron rule of another empire,” said Bush in his May 7 speech in Riga, Latvia’s capital. “This attempt to sacrifice freedom for the sake of stability left a continent divided and unstable,” he asserted. Bush said the Yalta agreements were in the same “unjust tradition” as the August 1939 Stalin-Hitler nonaggression pact, which secretly divided up Poland between German imperialism and the Soviet Union, and the September 1938 Munich Pact, in which the governments of France and the United Kingdom agreed to the Nazi-led German government’s demand for control of the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia.

“Mr. Bush has criticized Yalta at least six other times publicly, usually in Eastern Europe, but never so harshly,” noted an article in the May 16 *New York Times*.

Liberal politicians have long defended Roosevelt’s signing of the Yalta accord, arguing that it didn’t change anything but simply recognized the existing relationship of forces in Europe at the time.

Conservative commentators expressed their agreement with the U.S. president. “Bush was right to regret Yalta,” commented a May 11 editorial in *National Review*. His words “were meant to encourage democrats from Moscow to Tehran.” Patrick Buchanan, an incipient fascist politician, took a different position from Republican and Democratic politicians. In a column entitled “Was World War II Worth It?” he asserted

that Bush “told the awful truth about what really triumphed in World War II.... It was not freedom. It was Stalin, the most odious tyrant of the century.” He further argued, “If the objective of the West was the destruction of Nazi Germany, it was a ‘smashing’ success. But why destroy Hitler? If to liberate Germans, it was not worth it. After all, the Germans voted Hitler in.”

Bush and all bourgeois commentators, whether from a liberal, conservative, or ultrarightist perspective, are covering up what the Yalta conference was really about.

The truth can be found in a Feb. 17, 1945, front-page article in the *Militant*. The headline summed it up: “Secret Allied Conference at Yalta Designs Plans to Dominate Europe; Conceal Reactionary Aims Behind Deceitful Promises; Roosevelt, Churchill, Stalin Scheme to Crush Popular Revolutions Against Capitalist Rule.”

In the article, George Novack, writing under the pen name William F. Warde, said, “Meeting in conspiratorial secrecy at Yalta on the Black Sea, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin further elaborated their plans outlined at [a 1943 summit in] Teheran to carve up Europe, reduce its segments to semi-colonial status, subjugate its peoples, and crush the popular revolutions against capitalist rule, which are maturing throughout the war-torn continent....

“In Western Europe against the manifest will of the people and without bothering even to consult them, the Anglo-American imperialists have set up dictatorial puppet regimes, as in Italy and Greece, composed of militarists, monarchists and ex-fascists together with the traitorous Stalinists and Social Democrats. The masses starve, while the Allied armies loot the scant resources of the occupied countries. The scum of the ruling classes who collaborated with the Nazis are not only protected from the just wrath of the people, but kept in positions of authority and power,” the article explained.

As part of trying to keep continental Europe a weak rival to U.S. and British imperialism, the agreement at Yalta also set up plans for the occupation and dismemberment of Germany. The country was divided into four zones, with sections of the country under the control of U.S., British, French, and Soviet forces. The occupying imperialist forces sought to plunder the country’s wealth and prevent a revolt by working people. In the Soviet zone Moscow implemented a “reparations” policy of shipping whole factories out of Germany to Russia.

In countries proclaimed to be in the “Western sphere of influence,” Stalin kept his Yalta promises by ordering the influential Communist parties there to back bourgeois parties, blocking working-class struggles that could have toppled capitalist rule.

Stalinist betrayals in France, Greece

In France, Italy, and Greece, the predominant force on the scene was the Stalinist-led resistance movements. Workers in France virtually had power in their grasp in 1944 when Hitler’s armies were driven out of the country. Armed workers took over many cities and factories, but the treacherous role played by the Communist Party there



Members of National Popular Liberation Army distribute clothes in Igoumenitsa, Macedonia, Greece, in 1947 during civil war that erupted after World War II. Under orders from Moscow following Yalta pact, in which Stalin agreed to placing Greece in “Western” sphere of influence, the Communist Party leadership betrayed struggle.

enabled the French capitalists to regroup and hold onto power. The CP, the dominant force within the French trade union movement, rallied workers to back the capitalist government of Gen. Charles de Gaulle, who was put in power by the U.S. and British imperialist forces in August 1944 after the collapse of the pro-Nazi Vichy regime of Marshal Pétain. Stalinists became ministers in de Gaulle’s cabinet and forced workers’ militias to give up their arms and disband.

In Greece, the Partisan resistance movement forced the Nazi occupation forces to withdraw in September 1944. The CP-led National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS), in accord with Stalin’s policy of ceding Greece to the British “sphere of influence,” welcomed British troops into the country in October, even though ELAS had 50,000 troops under arms and was the only serious contender for power. Stalin and Roosevelt had given their backing to the British imperialists’ plan to intervene in Greece and install monarchist forces in power.

Monarchist troops fired on a mass ELAS demonstration in Athens on Dec. 3, 1944, provoking a month-long battle between the city’s working class and the British and monarchist armies. Two months later, the CP-led ELAS agreed to disarm in exchange for a short-lived legality. While sections of the leadership of ELAS disagreed and the civil war continued for four more years, the Stalinist betrayal enabled the local bourgeoisie, with support from the British, and then American, imperialists, to prevail.

In Central and Eastern Europe, as the Soviet army advanced toward Berlin, the discredited capitalist regimes collapsed and were replaced by governments in which Moscow, standing behind local Stalinist parties, exercised power.

For a time after the war, Moscow retained the capitalist structures in Eastern Europe as a bargaining chip in its efforts to secure a peaceful coexistence with imperialism. However, as Washington launched the

Cold War against working people in that region, the Stalin regime responded by allowing controlled mobilizations of workers and farmers there to overthrow capitalist property relations, bringing into existence bureaucratically deformed workers states.

The counterrevolutionary pacts signed at Yalta and then in Potsdam, Germany, in July 1945, were also aimed at holding back the rising anticolonial struggles.

With Tokyo’s surrender, for example, the Japanese occupation regime in formerly French Indochina collapsed. A spontaneous revolt swept Vietnam on Aug. 19, 1945, leading to the proclamation of an independent Vietnam with Communist Party leader Ho Chi Minh as president. The new government, a coalition between the Vietnamese CP and various capitalist parties, welcomed British troops into Saigon at the beginning of September. The British army, which deployed under its command 5,000 armed Japanese troops, 2,000 French soldiers, and a small contingent of U.S. troops, declared martial law in southern Indochina. British-led forces attacked the independence fighters in Saigon and restored the French colonial regime in the south.

In March 1946 the Vietnamese Communist Party signed a pact with Paris, which recognized the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the North as a semiautonomous part of the French Union, and authorized the landing of French troops in Hanoi. Using this beachhead, the French military ordered a massive bombardment of Haiphong harbor in November 1946 in which 6,000 people were killed. The Vietnamese Communist Party agreed to these concessions to the imperialist democracies that had defeated their rivals in World War II under heavy pressure from Moscow and Beijing.

The Vietnamese workers and peasants then had to wage another 30 years of war against French and then U.S. imperialist forces to win independence and the reunification of their country, after a heavy toll.

Yalta agreement at end of WW II

Continued from previous page

much more feasible at the time inasmuch as the havoc in France was relatively limited, while Germany then emerged with far fewer losses, with her territories, cities and plants unravaged by direct military operations and, in other respects, in a condition infinitely superior to the existing one. Yet victorious France of 1918 found herself unable to squeeze out more than a fraction of the stipulated reparations. With Clemenceau’s 1918 policy Stalin who demands—and requires—much more will get much less, if he ever collects.

Furthermore, Germany after Versailles lost far more than France ever gained. This quickly exhausted the defeated country, rendering further payments out of the question. The end results this time will be the same, except that the stage of Germany’s complete insolvency will be reached even sooner. In any case, were Stalin to loot every remaining resource on German soil, it would not suffice to restore devastated Soviet agriculture and industry.

But Stalin was never primarily concerned with the economic well-being of the masses inside or outside the USSR. His policy has unfailingly been determined by entirely different considerations, namely: the subordination of everything else to the interests of preserving his regime, and the power and privileges of the usurping Soviet bureaucracy. Stalin knows that this regime could never maintain itself in the face of a successful German revolution.

But it is precisely the Soviet Union which will be the first to suffer the effects of a crushed German revolution. Nationalized property, collectivized agriculture, planned economy have all been deeply undermined by the war. They can be stabilized only on the basis of the economic unification of the continent, first and foremost, central Europe, and the Socialist collaboration of all its peoples. Failing this, the restoration of capitalism is inevitable in the USSR; and with that *an equally inevitable worsening of the economic plight of the population....*

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The fight for workers' control of production

Below is an excerpt from *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution* by Leon Trotsky, one of central leaders of the Bolshevik-led October 1917 Russian Revolution. One of Pathfinder's books of the month for June, this title also contains introductory articles by Joseph Hansen and George Novack and the transcript of discussions with Trotsky on the *Transitional Program*.

The Bolshevik leader outlines an approach on how to mobilize working people around demands suited to their immediate needs and level of consciousness, but pointing toward the conquest of power by the working class and its allies and the elimination of the root cause of their oppression—capitalism. The excerpt below is from the introduction to the book by Joseph Hansen, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States until his death in 1979. Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



BY JOSEPH HANSEN

The Third Congress of the Communist International met from June 22 to July

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

12, 1921. Before the congress ended, the First Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions (Profintern) was already in session, its deliberations beginning July 3 and ending July 19. It should be explained that the Bolsheviks had decided to follow a dual tactic in the unions in the capitalist world. Every militant who could possibly do so was to work within the established unions, no matter how conservative or



A 1943 sit-down strike by auto workers at General Motors plant in Flint, Michigan.

reactionary the bureaucrats at the head might be. At the same time, the Communist International sought to establish unions committed to the socialist revolution. These were to be coordinated in the Red International of Labor Unions.

The resolutions and decisions of the First Congress of the Profintern reflect the considerable discussion that took place there on the tasks of Communists in the union movement. In an introduction which he wrote for a compilation of the documents immediately after the congress, A. Lozovsky, the international secretary of the organization, said the following about one of the subjects:

...the congress paid great attention to the problem of workers' control. Workers' control, at a given stage of development of the social struggle, is a thoroughly practical slogan for workers of all countries. In this respect a great deal of experience has been accumulated of late. It is of course very evident that Russia in this respect has the greatest experience and it is not surprising that the Russian experience...was made the basis of the resolution on the question. The congress did not satisfy itself with merely putting the question to the front, but gave a concrete form to it,

drew the workers' attention as to how workers' control has to be shaped, the methods of approaching it, and gave a practical program in this matter. We can consider the resolution on this subject exhaustive.

If not entirely "exhaustive," the resolution ("On the Question of Tactics") did include considerable detail. It has a very modern ring. Some of the sentences and even paragraphs sound like rough drafts of points included by Trotsky in the *Transitional Program* 17 years later.

A few quotations will illustrate this:

The basis for enlarging our influence must lie within the economic struggle. Questions of wages, of securing relief for the war victims, social insurance, unemployment, women and child labor, sanitary conditions in industrial establishments, high prices, the housing question, etc., taxation, mobilization, colonial schemes, financial combinations—all these must be utilized as daily material for organization and militant socialist education....

While conducting the fight for the improvement of the conditions of labor, raising the standard of life of the masses, and establishing workers' control over industry, we should always keep

in mind that it is impossible to solve all these problems within the frame of the capitalist system....

The resolution projects various stages in the development of workers' control. The most elementary stage is merely the realization gained by the workers through experiences such as war, unemployment, the chaos of capitalist society, the arbitrariness of the bosses, etc., that they must begin to exert their own control in the plants.

This primitive stage of workers' control reveals itself in sporadic attempts of the workers of each concern to supervise the work, the supply, and conditions of the machinery of production, to determine whether the closing of the factory, or the curtailing of production are really based upon necessity and are not a result of mischievous intention of the owner....

Workers' control "in its fullest expression" must include financial as well as technical supervision.

Only the full application of financial control reveals to the workers the fundamental basis of the capitalist system. In the process of financial control the workers learn in practice the dependence of their factory upon the banks and national and international financial trusts. The disclosure of the commercial, industrial, and particularly financial secrets gives the proletariat an exact picture of the prime source of the overwhelming sabotage on the part of the bourgeoisie....

The struggle for financial control leads the working class to the immediate and decisive clash with the bourgeoisie whose political power is to a certain extent based on financial power. At this stage, control inevitably takes an evident political aspect and requires political leadership. Meanwhile the increasingly frequent cases of seizure of factories, and at the same time impossibility of managing them without disposing of the financial apparatus, clearly puts before the workers the timely problem of getting hold of the financial system and, through it, of the whole industry. [This leads to a struggle for power and social revolution.]...the Red unions must pay special attention to the practice of workers' control, which is the best preliminary school for the proletariat striving to take power in its own hands.

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The Golden Years—“Noble, Oklahoma—More than 40 residents of a nursing home are being relocated after numerous



Harry Ring

violations prompted regulators to close the facility. Among the violations at the Noble Residential Care Home were rodent droppings, urine on kitchen plates and cockroaches ‘too numerous to count’ crawling on residents’ clothes and beds, officials said.”—*USA Today*

“Profit Protection Agency”?—A whistle-blower has exposed that the EPA has put a hold on shaping rules to protect children and workers exposed to lead-based paint. An agency spokesperson responded that they are simply considering “voluntary” procedures that might be more effective, and less costly for the industry and the public. The EPA guesstimates that about 1.4 million children a year are exposed to lead toxins in paint.

They are friendly chaps—Responding to a call of a possible shooting, 10 Los Angeles County sheriff’s deputies chased Winston Hayes, 44. He tried to stop as squad cars surrounded him. The deputies fired some 90 bullets, wounding Hayes with four gunshots—he was unarmed—and two cops. Sheriff

Lee Baca speculated the wounded cops were the result friendly fire.

P.S.—With the cross-fire shooting on TV nation-wide, it was clear the cops had gone ape. A department investigator upped the “friendly fire” theme, tagging it instead as an example of “contagious fire.”

Oh, well—“Carroll, Iowa—Bottled water is flying off the shelves after chunks of flesh and bones showed up in the city’s water systems last month. Officials say the water is safe to drink.... Chunks came from an animal, not a human”—News item.

Role model needed—There’s concern in Washington about the fledgling Iraqi government.

Auditing the regime reveals \$100 million in cash and supplies seem unaccounted for. Wailed a U.S. senator: “The U.S. risks fostering a culture of corruption in Iraq.” Well, how about a role model? Consolidate a U.S.-Iraq contract with Halliburton, a key player in Iraq.

True, there’s been questions about Halliburton on swollen contracts, and elusive dollars. These allegations have been deftly sidlined to keep the war going. But there’s Vice President Dick Cheney, who was Halliburton’s top dog until he was elected. He ensures that Halliburton does it all right.

Sleep well—It still seems weird. Former Tyco chief Dennis Kozlowski, and an associate, took

the witness stand, trying to answer the charge of using some \$600 million of Tyco money to spice up their life style. Kozlowski spent \$12 million decorating his New York apartment. This includes the notorious \$6,000 gold-threaded shower curtain, and a \$2,900 set of hangers (hand-crafted gold?). The list also included a \$4,995 blue and gold bed skirt (what’s a bedskirt?) and finally, a \$2,665 velvet pillow. Not several for pillow talk?

Imperialism, an example—“U.S. Territory, Virgin Islands—A cancer center in the Virgin Islands draws 50 percent of its patients from other small Eastern Caribbean islands in the Lesser Antilles that don’t have hospitals that provide chemotherapy and radiotherapy”—News item.

United Airlines ends employee pension plans

BY BETSEY STONE

SAN FRANCISCO—A federal bankruptcy court in Chicago approved May 10 the plan by United Airlines to terminate its four employee pension plans.

If union appeals of the decision fail, the pensions will be turned over to the federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. (PBGC), the government’s pension insurer. This will mean substantial cuts in pension benefits for 120,000 United employees and retirees.

At the same time, United Airlines is moving to throw out union contracts and impose cuts in wages and benefits of baggage handlers, agents, and supply clerks represented by the International Association of Machinists (IAM), and mechanics and cleaners who are members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA). The company has asked the bankruptcy court to rule in favor of this move.

Officials of the airline unions have used the company’s bankruptcy reorganization proceedings and the court rulings to claim their hands are tied, to point the blame at the government instead of where it belongs—the airline bosses, and to argue that concessions are needed to save “our company.”

AMFA has already announced a tentative agreement with United for a five-year contract with \$96 million in wage and benefit cuts. It is now to go before the membership for a vote. “Our choice is to consent to concessions from the company or risk even worse terms imposed by the bankruptcy judge who has shown a proclivity to agree to company demands,” wrote AMFA national director O.V. Delle-Femine in a May 16 letter on the agreement.

On May 10 hundreds of United workers and retirees protested the company’s attacks outside United’s maintenance base in San Francisco. The union officials had distributed signs held by a number of union members. They said, “U.S. Government: Hands Off My Pension.” As word of the judge’s decision on the pensions was passed down the line, Peggy O’Neal, a mechanic and member of AMFA, expressed the feelings of many. “Bankruptcy is the best thing happening to these companies to move against us,” he said. “It’s going to spread. Delta will want it. Other airlines. Maybe even General Motors.”

The ruling, which clears the way for the largest default in the 31-year history of the PBGC, made headlines across the country. Pointing to the \$30 billion in losses by the airline industry since 2000, an article in the May 11 *New York Times* spoke of “a domino effect as other airlines are forced to seek bankruptcy protection to bring their pension costs down to United’s levels.”

A growing number of airlines have filed for bankruptcy in recent years. During a second bankruptcy reorganization in February, US Airways terminated its pension plans. As a result, some retirees have seen benefits drop by as much as 50 percent. In 2003 American Airlines used the threat of bankruptcy to wring \$1.8 billion in wage and benefit cuts from its workers.

Workers at United, US Airways, and other companies where pensions are on the chopping block are now reaping the reward

of the failure of the union officialdom coming out of World War II, and in the decades afterward, to fight for what was needed—a social security system that includes guaranteed pensions for all and lifetime, government-guaranteed, universal health care for everyone in this country. Instead, the union tops channeled the struggle toward “fringe benefits,” pensions and medical plans that were contingent on the profits of the boss you worked for and negotiated on a company-by-company basis.

During better economic times this approach worked for some layers of the working class. But with a deepening world economic crisis, fueled by falling profit rates and increased competition among the capitalist companies, the bosses are beginning to throw out union contracts, cut wages, and eliminate “fringe benefits.”

The fraud of the Employee Stock Ownership Plan at United, agreed to by the IAM in 1994, was another consequence of the union officialdom’s identification of the workers’ interests with those of the company. Workers were told they were part of an “employee-owned airline,” and in lieu of wages they were given stock, which later became almost worthless.

When profit margins shrank, it became more obvious who the real owners of United are, as the billionaire stock and bondholders were first in line to be paid while the workers got the axe. Through this experience workers are finding there is no such thing as “equal” sacrifice between workers and bosses under capitalism, a system based on the profit needs of the capitalists.

Since United declared bankruptcy in 2002, UAL workers have given up \$2.5 billion a year in concessions. The number of employees has declined from 100,000 to 62,000, with many jobs being “outsourced” to contractors. Now the company says it needs another \$725 million a year in concessions, in order to get the loans it needs to emerge from bankruptcy.

Officials in all the airline unions have called on workers to once again accept cuts to save United. The unions representing pilots and flight attendants have already agreed to concession contracts. The IAM is still in negotiations.

“We are keenly aware of United’s financial situation and we acknowledge the need for additional sacrifice,” wrote IAM District 141 president Randy Canale in a letter to union members May 17.

This line of the labor tops has derailed workers’ willingness to fight. In January, after voting by a margin of 57 percent to reject a tentative agreement negotiated with the company, AMFA members passed a measure to authorize a strike by 85 percent. On May 11, IAM officials said that in a recent vote 94 percent of IAM members voted in favor of authorizing a strike.

Many of the protesters at the maintenance base said that if a new agreement does not include more protection against outsourcing of their jobs, they are ready to strike. Alfredo, a mechanic with 20 years seniority who faces huge cuts in his pension, said, “No matter what, the future looks bleak. I don’t want to strike, but if we do, I’ll go for it.”

Unionists protest layoffs at Alaska Airlines



Militant/Dean Peoples

Some 50 unionists and supporters picket Alaska Airlines stockholders meeting May 17 in Seattle to protest the termination of 472 ramp workers and baggage handlers at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. Several days earlier, the airline had replaced them with contract workers from Menzies Aviation. On May 6 the unionists, members of International Association of Machinists Local 2202, had voted down the company’s contract proposal calling for cuts in hourly wages, health-care benefits, and pension plans.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



June 6, 1980

After years of the most brutal military dictatorship and American oppression, the people of South Korea have poured into the streets of cities and towns across the country. With breathtaking rapidity, hundreds of thousands of them—students, workers, unemployed youths, women—have gone into action to demand an end to martial law and the institution of democratic freedoms.

In the southwest, the urban populations of Kwangju, Mokpo, Hwasun, Polkyo, and other areas have risen up and seized control of their cities, posing an immediate challenge to the survival of the military regime headed by Gen. Chon Too Hwan.

Not since the end of the Korean War has the country witnessed such massive political ferment.

The insurrection in Kwangju—South Korea’s fourth-largest city—was sparked by the military regime’s own actions.

After weeks of mounting student protests and labor strikes in Seoul, Taegu, Sabuk, and other cities, the military authorities announced on the morning of May 18 that they were closing all universities, banning all political gatherings and labor strikes, imposing press censorship, and extending martial law to the entire country.

Hundreds of political activists, journalists, dissident priests, and student leaders were arrested and taken off to secret detention centers. One of the most prominent figures arrested was Kim Dae Jung, a leader of the bourgeois opposition New Democratic Party who comes from South Cholla Province, of which Kwangju is the capital.



June 6, 1955

The Supreme Court’s long-awaited enforcement ruling on school desegregation went about as far as it could go in appeasing the white-supremacist Deep South without reversing the original decision completely.

While the court reaffirmed what it said a year ago—that Jim Crow schools are unconstitutional, it failed to declare such schools illegal as of now or any specific time in the future. It asked school boards and federal judges in the South to apply the decision themselves and figure out how and when to go about it. While it said these officials should not delay, on the other hand, it said they needn’t hasten any more than was practicable and reasonable. Moreover, it said, the decision should be applied in “good faith.”

In short the court backed down completely from putting teeth into its May 17, 1954 decision. Southern racist officials may be subject, years from now, to the inconvenience of being gummed by the court’s desegregation ruling but they’ll never get bit by it.

Southern politicians and newspapers were loud in their praises of the high court’s “realism” and “wisdom” in rendering such a toothless implementation order. The only criticism the most violent racists could think of was that the ruling hadn’t reversed the original decision outright.

Tom Tobb, head of the [Mississippi] State Democratic Committee, amplified: “We couldn’t have asked for anything better than to have the matter placed in the hands of our federal district courts. They will consider the suits in good faith and in the manner in which they understand Mississippi’s racial problems.”

Oppose ‘guest worker’ bills!

We are using the editorial space this week to publish the statement below, which was issued May 25 by Martin Koppel, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City.

Our campaign calls on the labor movement to oppose both the McCain-Kennedy “Secure America and Orderly Immigration” bill, and the Bush administration’s “temporary worker” proposal. Both are designed to reinforce divisions in the working class and maintain a permanent category of workers stripped of rights in order to guarantee a reservoir of superexploited labor for U.S. bosses. These measures are a threat to the entire labor movement, which should campaign vigorously for their defeat.

Both proposals would create a pool of “guest workers” dependent on employers to keep their work permits. The purpose is to regularize the legal status of a layer of immigrant workers in order to guarantee bosses a more stable workforce, and to give the government a ready-made list of immigrants they could keep track of and victimize.

These measures are designed to allow the government to tighten its control over immigrant workers, making them subject to deportation once their visas expire and scapegoating them for unemployment in times of economic slowdown. This is underscored by the provision that employers could sponsor an immigrant only by “proving” that no “American worker” wanted the job.

The McCain-Kennedy bill is also part of the reactionary “homeland defense” campaign that, in the name of “securing the borders against terrorists,” is being used to lay the groundwork for increased militarization of civilian life and other steps to crack down on working-class resistance in coming years.

The Socialist Workers campaign also calls for the repeal of federal and state laws mandating employer checks of immigration documents. We oppose the Real ID Act and other measures aimed at turning a driver’s license into a national ID card, which will be used to go after not only immigrants but working people as a whole.

The unprecedented integration of immigrants into U.S. society today—not only in a few large cities, but throughout the country—is due to the fact that capitalists are dependent on immigrant labor, from the packinghouses to hotels to agriculture. The exploitation of immigrant labor is a source of superprofits that gives U.S. capitalists an edge in the cutthroat competition with their imperialist rivals worldwide. The wealthy families who rule this country are not trying to push foreign-born workers *out* of this country, but to push them *down*.

At the same time, through this accelerated immigration, driven by grinding economic conditions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the working class in the United States and other industrialized countries is becoming more and more internationalized. These changes in social composition not only break down national divisions, provincialism, and prejudices that sap the power of the labor movement, but enrich the political and union experiences of the working class and broaden its historical and cultural horizons. Immigrant workers not only share their experiences with fellow workers. As they confront racist discrimination, many also shed their own backward, anti-Black prejudices in the course of common battles, learning from the example set by workers who are African-American.

The McCain-Kennedy bill and the Bush proposal would be used to undermine this process and set back the working class as a whole.

To confront the government and employer assaults on immigrant workers, what is needed above all is *to organize workers into trade unions, and to use and extend union power* to resist the bosses’ assaults on wages, benefits, and working conditions. The Co-Op coal miners in Utah, meat packers in the Midwest and other regions of the country, garment workers at Point Blank Body Armor in Florida, and hotel workers in New York—many of whom are foreign-born—have all been waging organizing struggles or fighting to strengthen and use their unions to the benefit of all labor. They are showing an example to working people everywhere.

U.S. officials balk at nuclear power for Venezuela

Continued from front page

MacKinnon, who was press secretary to former senator Robert Dole, pointed to Chávez’s recent hosting in Caracas of Iranian president Mohammad Khatami and the Venezuelan president’s defense of Iran’s nuclear energy program. MacKinnon asserted that the Chávez government “might be trying to acquire nuclear technology or weapons from Iran” and cited an unnamed high-ranking U.S. official who agreed that this represented a “threat” to Washington.

Speaking on his weekly Sunday TV program, broadcast at an event in Caracas for Iranian companies, Chávez said, “If we had the technical capacity and the resources right now, we would participate in this effort because it’s one of the paths toward diversifying energy sources.... We could, along with Brazil, with Argentina and others, start investigations into the nuclear sector and ask for help from countries like Iran.”

The Venezuelan president said such development would be “for peace and energy,” not for producing nuclear weapons.

Chávez has defended Iran’s efforts to meet its growing electrical needs by developing a nuclear energy program in face of threats by Washington and other imperialist powers, which argue that Tehran is seeking to develop atomic weapons.

Both Chávez and Iranian government officials “have argued that wealthy nations like the United States cannot keep today’s energy-related technologies for themselves while developing countries struggle to produce enough energy to satisfy domestic needs,” reported the Scottish daily *Scotsman* in its May 23 issue.

Brazilian vice president Jose Alencar was quick to reply that his government was open to cooperation with Venezuela but would not be associated with Iran. Brazil’s science and technology minister, Eduardo Campos, said his country would develop its nuclear program in strict compliance with policies enforced by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Under the banner of stopping nuclear weapons proliferation, Washington has led a campaign to prevent Iran and other semicolonial nations from developing nuclear energy to generate electricity. Last November the Brazilian government bowed to imperialist pressure to allow IAEA inspections of its uranium enrichment plant.

Venezuela is the world’s fifth-largest oil exporter. Like Iran, it is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries—a group of 11 semicolonial nations that have united to strengthen their control of oil resources in face of the power of the imperialist oil monopolies, which have tremendous influence over world production, distribution, and prices of petroleum.

Meanwhile, the Venezuelan government has announced that the state-run oil company PdVSA will move its headquarters for Caribbean operations to Cuba. In 2000, under the Chávez administration, Venezuela began selling

53,000 barrels of crude oil a day to Cuba on preferential terms; it has since increased these sales to more than 80,000 a day.

OAS committee would target Venezuela

In late May the U.S. government announced its intention of getting the OAS to establish a committee to monitor Latin American governments for their “quality of democracy” as defined by the U.S.-dominated body. Comments by U.S. officials make it clear that the main target of such a move would be Venezuela.

The U.S. rulers have taken a hostile approach to the Venezuelan government. They are concerned about the increased confidence of workers and peasants in that country who have fought for land, jobs, greater control of national resources, and improved living conditions. They oppose government measures that have benefited working people, from a land reform to literacy and adult education programs.

“The elected governments that do not govern democratically should be held accountable by the OAS,” the newly chosen OAS general secretary, José Insulza of Chile, declared May 21 in a reference to the U.S. proposal. U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice was at his side. A *New York Times* report noted that “Ms. Rice and other American officials had wrested that remark from him in exchange for American support for his candidacy.”

Anonymous U.S. officials told the *Times* that Washington would “hold the OAS accountable for holding the Venezuelan government accountable for governing democratically.”

Several Latin American governments distanced themselves from the U.S. proposal for an OAS committee to sit in judgment of Latin American governments. “I don’t think this idea will pass,” said Jorge Chen, the Mexican ambassador. “Every country has its problems,” stated Rodolfo Gil, the Argentine ambassador to the OAS. “But I can tell you one thing: the most powerful countries will never be there.”

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Immigration bill

Continued from front page

security”—to keep track of and control of foreign-born workers at a time when the unprecedented influx of immigrants has created a burgeoning underground economy. It also provides for beefing up “border security.”

“I want an immigration system that says we’re not going to look for people who come to mow our lawns and wash our dishes and clean our babies’ behind and raise them for us,” said Rep. Luis Gutierrez, a Democrat from Illinois at a May 12 press conference held to announce support for the bill. “Those aren’t the people we’re concerned about. We’re concerned about drug dealers and smugglers on our border. And through this process we won’t have to worry about those people that come to wash our dishes and mow our lawns and do the kinds of jobs other people in America don’t want to do.”

Temporary work visas

The law would establish an annual quota of 400,000 temporary work visas. The undocumented immigrant population in the United States has grown by about a half a million workers a year over the past five years. Estimates for the total number of undocumented workers in the country range between 8 million and 12 million—several times higher than the number two decades ago.

Workers who do not have legal residence status would have to apply for a three-year work visa, renewable for another three years. Applicants who make it through an extensive screening process, including a “security check” and physical exam, would be placed in a “Willing Worker-Willing Employer Electronic Job Registry.” After announcing a job for 30 days without a U.S. legal resident getting hired, a boss would be able to hire a registered “guest” worker.

The visa applicant would then receive a “tamper-resistant” card that would include fingerprints and other biometric identifiers, the card-holder’s citizenship information, and the expiration date of their work permit. Their employer would be given access to the database to verify their documentation.

If the “willing employer” decides to fire or lay off a “willing worker” hired through the program, the worker would lose the visa within 45 days if they can’t find another job in the registry. This provides the legal basis for mass deportations in times of economic crisis.

The law includes special provisions for workers who regularly enter the United States for seasonal jobs and then return to their country. The agribusiness giants in California and other areas of the country depend on migrant labor to extract superprofits from food production.

‘Not an amnesty’

“Make no mistake—this is not—I repeat—not an amnesty bill,” said Republican senator McCain at the May 12 news conference, responding to right-wing critics. “The reality is, there’s an estimated 10 to 11 million undocumented people living and working in this country. It would be impossible to identify and round them up and send them back to the countries from which they came. At the same time, they cannot just come forward and report and deport.

“This bill would allow them to come forward, submit to criminal and security background checks, pay processing fees and \$2,000 fines, and apply for legal work status that would last for a six-year period; six years before they would even be eligible to begin the process for citizenship in America.... [Then] they could get in line to adjust status,” that is, apply for a green card.

“We expect Mexico and the other nations...to replace an illegal immigration flow with regulated and legal immigration,” stated Democratic senator Theodore Kennedy. “This is not a guarantee of citizenship, but an opportunity to continue to work hard, play by the rules, and earn permanent residency.... If they are willing to work for us, openly, then we will be willing to do something fair for them. It’s long past time to put the underground economy above ground and recognize the reality of immigrants in our work force.”

The measure also calls for the creation by the Department of Homeland Security of a “National Strategy for Border Security,” including the increased use of aerial surveillance and other moves to beef up the policing of the border area. The U.S. Congress recently approved a measure that would finance the construction of an additional border wall to strengthen the existing barrier along the U.S.-Mexico border between San Diego and Tijuana.

The Kennedy-McCain bill would allocate funds for “robust law enforcement assistance” for collaborating with the governments of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and other Central American nations to “dismantle human smuggling organizations and gain tighter control over the border.” It includes a specific program to beef up security along the Mexican border with Guatemala and Belize.

Correction

The article “CIA-trained anti-Cuba mass murderer arrested in U.S.” in the May 30 issue incorrectly said that Luis Posada Carriles is a native of Venezuela. He was born in Cuba and is a naturalized citizen of Venezuela.

Waco, Texas, residents demand memorial to racist 1916 lynching

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—On May 15, 1916, Jesse Washington, a 17-year-old Black farmhand from the nearby town of Robinson, was brutally lynched in front of a crowd estimated at 10,000 to 15,000 people in the city square of Waco, Texas.

Nearly 89 years later on April 25, 120 residents of Waco met to discuss erecting a public memorial in the town to the “Waco Horror,” as the Washington lynching was called by the NAACP at the time. Members of two prominent Waco churches, faculty and students from Baylor University, and local high school students were in attendance.

Patricia Bernstein, an author who has written a book on the lynching of Washington, was invited to speak. Following her presentation church leaders announced that they would form a joint committee to campaign for the memorial.

Despite the history of lynchings throughout Texas, no city in the state has erected a public memorial to the victims of racist terror. Many of the high school students and others who examined the photographs of Washington’s lynching and listened to Bernstein speak last month said that they had not previously known about the lynching.

“This history keeps erupting,” stated Bernstein to the *Houston Chronicle*. “Over and over for 89 years at least part of the white community has been trying to hush it up.”

“Some Waco residents—including a late black mayor—have argued that the lynching need not be officially mourned and that Waco should look to the future,” stated an editorial in the May 4 *Houston Chronicle*. “Other residents, including a joint committee of black and white churches, are calling for a memorial to

spell out what happened and apologize for it. The instinct to atone is the right one. Waco today is far beyond the city whose citizens lynched.”

Washington, who had just been convicted by a jury that took four minutes to find him guilty of killing the white woman he worked for, was removed from the courthouse. The lynchers chained him around the neck and dragged him through the city square to a tree under which they had piled wooden boxes and trash from nearby businesses. They doused his body and the pile of trash with coal oil. They threw the chain over a limb of the tree. After lighting the pit on fire and cutting Washington with knives, they jerked him into the air and lowered him into the fire repeatedly.

The scene was recorded by the city’s most prominent photographer, Fred Gildersleeve, who had been advised ahead of time that the lynching would take place. He set up his camera in the second story window of the mayor’s office at City Hall to take souvenir photos. Of the pictures he took, six were made into postcards and circulated throughout the states for several years to come.

In 2000 these postcards were displayed at the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, and then toured around the country in the exhibition “Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America.”

The photos clearly recorded the participants. Elisabeth Freeman, a white suffragist dispatched by the NAACP to Waco immediately after the lynching to investigate the incident, found out and recorded the names of the leaders—a collection of prominent citizens and those in the employ of the city’s elite.

The NAACP, then led by W.E.B.

DuBois, published the facts about Washington’s brutal murder, including photographs, in a special eight-page spread in the July 1916 issue of the organization’s journal, *Crisis*. The NAACP then launched a national campaign against lynchings.

No one was ever prosecuted for this crime. No lawyer would even take the case. Two of the ringleaders went on to long careers with the police.

The only person to serve jail time in connection with the lynching was Black journalist A.T. Smith, assistant editor of the *Paul Quinn Weekly*, the journal of one of Waco’s two Black colleges. He was arrested and convicted of criminal libel after he reprinted a story from the *Chicago Defender*. The June 10, 1916, *Defender* article claimed that Washington was innocent and that the dead woman’s husband had been arrested for her murder. Smith was sentenced to a year’s hard labor on the county road crew.

Organized, state-sanctioned terror

The Jim Crow system was imposed in the decade after the end of the Civil War through counterrevolutionary terror. In many states throughout the South, Radical Reconstruction governments, which included ex-slaves, free farmers, and others, sprang up after the defeat of slavery. They began to press for the expropriation of the land of the ex-slave owners and its division among freed slaves and other small rural producers. “Forty acres and a mule” became their slogan.

Fearing the rise of a united working-class in which Black and white artisans and industrial workers would come together as a powerful oppositional force, allied with free working farmers, the industrial capitalist class in the north engineered the defeat of this rising movement.

Through state-sponsored terror the rural poor and working class in the South were forcibly divided along color lines. A system of extensive segregation was legalized.

Racist mob and vigilante violence was a key element of this. Until the defeat of Jim Crow through the mass civil rights struggle of the 1950s and ’60s, it was hard to find a local sheriff throughout most of the South who didn’t double as the local organizer of the Ku Klux Klan.

Official statistics rank Texas third, after Mississippi and Georgia, in the total number of lynching victims. Of the 468 persons officially recorded as having been lynched in Texas between 1885 and 1942, 339 were listed as



Onlookers and racist murderers crowd around charred corpse of 17-year-old Jesse Washington, who was lynched May 15, 1916, in Waco, Texas.

Black, 77 white, 53 Hispanic, and 1 Native American. In 1885 alone, official records report 22 mobs lynched 43 people in Texas. Many such incidents never made it to the record books.

The same year that Washington was killed in Waco, Anthony Crawford, a successful Black cotton farmer in South Carolina, was killed for allegedly cursing a white businessman in a dispute over the sale price of his cotton. After being released from jail, Crawford was cornered by a mob and lynched. His property was then seized by the banks.

The union movement was also a target of this campaign. Among the victims of lynchings during this period were also union organizers. In 1910, Castengo Ficcarotta and Angelo Albano, Italian immigrant workers in a cigar factory in Tampa, Florida, were lynched after workers at the plant defended their strike from company strikebreakers.

— MILITANT LABOR FORUMS —

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FBI steps up mail interception

Continued from Page 5

the Postal Service, told the *New York Times*. The “discretion” of postal officials resulted in their conducting 14,000 mail covers in 2000, and not rejecting a single FBI request in recent years.

This issue was at the center of a lawsuit filed in 1973 by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance against the FBI, CIA, Postmaster General, and other government agencies charging decades of spying, harassment, and disruption. The suit charged government agencies with mail-tampering as well as “illegal acts of blacklisting, harassment, electronic surveillance, [and] burglary.”

Noting the ongoing impact of this case, a May 21 *Times* article about the FBI’s plan for expanded mail surveillance powers reported, “In the mid-1970s the Church Committee, a Senate panel that documented CIA abuses, faulted a program created in the 1950s in New York that used mail covers to trace and sometimes open

mail going to the Soviet Union from the United States.

“A suit brought in 1973 by a high school student in New Jersey, whose letter to the Socialist Workers Party was traced by the FBI as part of an investigation into the group, led to a rebuke from a federal judge, who found that the national security grounds for such mail covers were unconstitutionally vague.”

The federal judge referred to in this case was Thomas Griesa, appointed by former president Richard Nixon, who ruled in August 1986 in favor of the SWP and YSA. Griesa found the FBI guilty of violating the constitutional rights of the members and supporters of these organizations.

The new proposals to broaden mail surveillance seek to once again expand FBI powers to spy on and harass groups and individuals, which will include socialist organizations, trade unions, Black rights groups, and others who oppose government policies.

— LETTERS —

Union solidarity

A prime example of union solidarity manifested itself in the strike of 1,900 utility workers at NStar electric and gas of eastern Massachusetts. Hours into the strike, the company cut off health insurance and other benefits, meaning strikers must pay full medical costs, which most strikers can’t afford.

Mark Simpson, a worker at NStar for 19 years, has a six-year-old daughter who had her right leg amputated. She told him she wanted to walk the picket line with him on crutches. Termination by the company of health coverage prevented her from getting a new prosthetic leg.

When Thomas May, C.E.O. of NStar, was informed of this during an interview by the *Boston Globe*, he offered to have the company foot the bill. Simpson said he would refuse medical aid

from NStar until it restored health insurance for all strikers.

The next day, at a meeting of 1,500 union members, the workers voted unanimously to cover the costs for the prosthesis with money from the strike fund. “That’s what a union is all about, one for all and all for one,” Simpson said.

Gary Cohen
Arlington, Massachusetts

Immigration in Spain

More than 700,000 immigrants have presented documentation to obtain residency in Spain as part of a three-month process set in motion by a new addition to the *Ley de Extranjería*, which ended May 7. The “normalization law” was promised by President Zapatero in the 2004 elections and was formally approved at the end of December. The new law, which took effect Febru-

ary 7, requires the employer to present the residency application to City Hall on behalf of the immigrant. Requirements include a contract of employment, proof of residence with City Hall prior to Aug. 7, 2004, and a clean past criminal-record clearance from the country of origin.

The new law has been criticized by the main immigrant rights organizations. Mustafá Mrabet, president of the Association of Moroccan Immigrant Workers in Spain, has stated that the requirement of the criminal record from the country of origin has been very difficult for many to obtain. Rosario Zanabria, president of the immigrant organization Ari-Peru, has said many companies evade their obligation to contract employees, refusing to normalize the situation of foreign-born workers and firing some who ask for a contract.

On April 24 around 400 people protested in Madrid and about 3,000 in Barcelona. Demands included a prolonging of the normalization process, the acceptance of other sources of proof of residency, a clear criminal record from Spain only, and a solution for those who are unable to obtain a contract from their employer.

In mid-April the government authorized accepting other official papers that prove residency, including past deportation orders.

Spain now has the fourth-highest rate of immigration in Europe. Immigrants constitute 8.4 percent of the population, or 3.7 million people. Another 800,000 are estimated to be undocumented. Immigration rates in Spain have steadily risen in recent years. Moroccans, Ecuadorians, Colombians, and Romanians constitute the most numerous immigrant

nationalities. Every year thousands are detained as they try to cross the Strait of Gibraltar into Spain. But southern immigration continues to grow despite the treacherous conditions of the Mediterranean crossing. Most of these immigrants come from Morocco, Algeria, and other sub-Saharan African countries—including Senegal, Nigeria, and the Ivory Coast.

This process reflects the increased integration of immigrant workers into society.

Emily Paul
Granada, Spain

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

UK food workers hold walkouts over pay

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON—In the fifth week of strike action, 40 workers joined a picket line May 19–20 at the Ambala Foods factory in Stratford, East London. The workers escalated their weekly walkouts from one to two days.

Members of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), they are demanding a weekly pay increase of £50 over five years (£1=\$1.83). Their wages have been frozen for the last five years. The workers won union recognition at the factory in 2003 after a successful work stoppage to reinstate two sacked workers.

Most of the 100 workers at the plant are from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh and have worked there for a number of years. Ambala Foods makes Indian sweets and savouries for restaurants and shops across the United Kingdom. The owners also have an outlet in Chicago.

Cheers greeted a large flour truck May 20 as its drivers refused to cross the picket line. Earlier, an elevator engineer refused to cross on a strike day. Union steward Lokon Miah said the TGWU is receiving invitations for speaking engagements on the struggle and TGWU members are distributing an information card about the strike outside Ambala shops. A TGWU shop steward from the local bus depot visited the strikers May 13.

“The cost of living is high in London,” Miah told the *Militant*. “That’s why we need a living wage, not just a minimum wage. Our ballot vote for strike action was 93 percent and we’ve increased union membership from 60 to 90 since the strike began, including joining up some night-shift workers who are not on strike.” One night worker said some of his shift would consider joining the strike if the boss didn’t raise their pay.

“This boss is a liar,” said picket organizer Mohammad Shabbir. “We can’t trust his negotiations. That’s why we’ve stepped up the action.”

After week three, the boss, Shoukat



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Workers picket Ambala Foods in London April 22. Since then, they have been waging weekly one- or two-day strikes demanding higher pay after five-year wage freeze.

Ali, made a verbal pay offer to raise pre-tax wages by £26 to £40 a week, workers said. Basic pre-tax wages at the plant range

from £194 to £260 a week. When TGWU officials put the new wages in writing in the talks, Ali claimed he had never made

Close vote on federal budget in Ottawa shows instability of Canadian government

BY NATALIE DOUCET
AND ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO—The Liberal government led by Prime Minister Paul Martin narrowly survived a vote on its budget bill May 19, after weeks of factional warfare between the Liberals and opposition parties. The Speaker of the House of Com-

mons, a Liberal, had to break the tie. The result reflects the continuing instability facing the Canadian ruling class and its only party with support in all regions of the country.

Had the Liberals lost the vote, an immediate election would have ensued. Just 11 months earlier, the Liberals won with 135 out of 308 seats in the federal parliament. The Conservative Party, which won 99 seats, and the Bloc Quebecois (BQ), with 54 seats, had been promising to bring down the government for the last few weeks over a Liberal “sponsorship scandal.”

In the days before the vote, Martin agreed to demands from the New Democratic Party (NDP) to increase spending for housing, education, the environment, and foreign “aid” by Can\$4.6 billion (Can\$1 = US 79 cents), and to defer some corporate tax cuts, in return for NDP support. The government won the vote only after a prominent Conservative front bench, Belinda Stronach, crossed the floor to join the Liberals, citing fears that an early election would significantly boost the BQ, which promotes sovereignty for Quebec. Her wavering reflected the state of mind of a significant section of Canada’s ruling families.

Since 1993, Ottawa has spent nearly \$725 million to promote “Canadian unity” through a propaganda campaign aimed against the right of Quebecois to self-determination. In 1995, a referendum on independence for Quebec was defeated by a very narrow margin, with 50.6 percent voting against and 49.4 percent in favor.

The “sponsorship scandal” fully erupted in 2002 when the auditor general of Canada reported that \$100 million out of \$250 million in sponsorships had been diverted to dubious commissions for ad agencies working with and for the Liberal Party. Testimony before a judicial inquiry, led by Justice John Gomery of Quebec, has revealed that hundreds of thousands of dollars in kickbacks and laundered money made their way into Liberal Party coffers.

Such corruption is standard practice for capitalist parties and is not what underlies the crisis. Charles Guité, the public servant in charge of dispersing the federal funds, told the Gomery inquiry the Conservatives had “meddled more.” When the Liberals won the federal elections in 1993, the minister in charge of the program at the time, David Dingwall, after unsuccessfully try-

ing to press Guité to reveal Conservative Party practices, reportedly congratulated Guité on his discretion and said, “You won’t rat on them, you won’t rat on us.”

The precarious position of the government flows from the rulers’ incapacity to find a way out of their decline internationally as a weaker imperialist power, and their inability to push to the back burner aspirations for national self-determination in Quebec.

During a recent visit, U.S. president George Bush promised to ease U.S.-Canadian trade disputes. But Washington has maintained punitive tariffs on Canadian exports of softwood lumber and beef. The decision by the Martin government to not publicly back the U.S.-sponsored anti-ballistic missile shield has not helped Ottawa.

Despite this intimidation, Miah said, “We are very solid and determined.”

Unionists said messages of support should be sent to the Transport and General Workers Union at tgould@tguw.org.uk.

Jim Spaul, James Haywood, and Katan Alder contributed to this article.

Steelworkers in Ontario strike to hold off concessions

BY JOE YATES
AND JOHN STEELE

INGERSOLL, Ontario—Steelworkers on strike at Ingersoll Machine and Tool (IMT) steel plant in this town of 11,000 about two hours west of Toronto, turned back May 14 a large tractor trailer attempting to cross their picket line. The truck, which had plates from Oklahoma, circled the plant once. The driver then waited five minutes at the line while strikers appealed to him not to cross. “I can’t take this,” the driver finally said. “I’m out of here.” As he left he blew his horn in solidarity.

The workers at IMT make trailer axles and shell casings. The casings are sold both to the U.S. and Canadian armed forces. The new owner is demanding massive concessions from the 136 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 2918. The strike began March 5.

Initially the bosses’ demands included a 12 percent wage cut, 32 percent lower wages for new hires, the elimination of four paid holidays, cutting vacation to one week per year, and reduced drug and dental benefits.

On May 17 the strikers rejected by 97 percent the company’s offer, which withdrew these demands but maintained filling positions by “skill and ability” rather than by seniority. It also suspended for two weeks 10 workers who had been fired for “strike activity,” Local 2918 vice president Terry Coleman told the *Militant*.

The company added that if these workers received even one disciplinary notice in the future they would be fired. A sign on the picket line lists the fired strikers’ names and their seniority, ranging from 38 to 7 years. The strikers have made clear that they will not return to the job without

these 11 workers.

Coleman said the bosses “think the union has too much control. They don’t care if the union is there as long as it is handcuffed and can’t do anything.”

During the first few days of the walkout the workers kept strikebreakers out of the plant. Strikers report that some are young people who were threatened with losing their government welfare payments if they didn’t cross the line. The unionists have faced court injunctions aimed at preventing them from stopping the strikebreakers from crossing the line.

The latest injunction allows workers to have five picketers in front of the plant and to delay crossings by 10 minutes. Across the road, the strikers have put up two tents and have a radio playing loudly so that security has trouble monitoring their conversations electronically. The company has hired the notorious AFI security agency to escort the strikebreakers, who come in buses, and to videotape the strikers on the picket line.

The walkout is winning wide support. Strikers reported that one restaurant in town refused to serve security guards and instead sent spaghetti to the picket line.

About 2,000 workers, organized by the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), are employed at the CAMI auto plant down the road. Other plants in the area are organized by the Steelworkers. The strikers have received support from unionists in these plants and beyond.

At a May 7 barbecue held downtown, they raised \$1,800 for the strike. The CAW local at CAMI is donating \$2,000 a month. CAW members from the Sterling truck plant in St. Thomas have joined the picket line.